



In 2003 the California Exotic Plant Management Team controlled pampas grass (*Cortaderia jubata*) growing on the Wildcat Cliffs of Point Reyes National Seashore, an effort that required climbing skills and careful attention to safety.

## Natural Resource Challenge evaluated favorably by OMB

*By Abigail Miller*

The Natural Resource Challenge was one of the first government programs to be the subject of an Office of Management and Budget (OMB) requirement initiated in 2002. OMB's new Program Analysis Review Tool, or PART, was first applied to the Challenge in September 2002 for use in conjunction with development of the FY 2004 budget. The administration introduced this process to reform budget development by establishing a single tool for evaluating program performance and using the results as the basis for budgetary decisions. The PART score for 2002 was 72, considered very respectable. The process identified weaknesses in the NPS financial management system and the need for a comprehensive review of the Challenge by an objective party. A subsequent broadened review of the Natural Resource Stewardship and Science Directorate, which included the Natural Resource Challenge, was conducted in 2003 for the FY 2005 budget and resulted in an even higher draft score. Further information on PART and the 2002 evaluation is available from OMB's websites (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/> [search on "PART"] and <http://www.whitehouse.omb/budget/fy2004/pma.html>). ■

---

**abby\_miller@nps.gov**

Deputy Associate Director, Natural Resource Stewardship and Science;  
Washington, D.C.

the Student Conservation Association uses "native plant corps," which will increase capabilities to control invasive plants and restore native species while training young professionals. In addition, through the Secretary of the Interior's Cooperative Conservation Initiative, several teams received grants to work with partners for invasive weed control to restore parklands.

It is a golden time for managing invasive species in national parks. Broad recognition from partners, visitors, and institutions indicates that invasive species are a major threat to our natural heritage. The increases in funding for invasive species management have certainly reflected this recognition and also demonstrated commitment. ■

---

**linda\_drees@nps.gov**

Chief, Exotic Species and Restoration Branch, Biological Resource Management  
Division; Fort Collins, Colorado